



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPI 2006-38

Monday, April 30, 2007

CONTACT: John Johnson, Communications Director, (608) 266-1098

Wisconsin's 11 Presidential Scholar Semifinalists named

MADISON—Eleven Wisconsin students are among nearly 550 semifinalists for the 2007 Presidential Scholars program, one of the nation's highest honors for graduating seniors.

"It is quite an honor to be named a semifinalist in the Presidential Scholars program," said State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster. "These students are among the highest academic and artistic achieving students in our state and nation."

Wisconsin's Presidential Scholar Semifinalists are

- Nyssa M. Becker of Menomonee Falls, Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School;
- Katrina R. Galka of Whitefish Bay, Dominican High School;
- Daniel T. Gerber, Onalaska High School;
- Caroline E. Hagerman of Wauwatosa, University School of Milwaukee;
- Mark M. Kelly, West High School, Madison;
- Robert A. Marsland III, St. Ambrose Academy, Madison;
- Mallery R. Olsen, Memorial High School, Madison;
- Kelsey C. Schuster, Fond du Lac High School;
- Taylor D. Smith of Adell, Random Lake High School;
- Sakura Takemitsu, Memorial High School, Madison; and
- Alex J. Yeh, Neenah High School.

Most students are chosen for the Presidential Scholars based on exceptional performance on the ACT or SAT college admissions tests. Galka is among students nominated through her participation in the Arts Recognition and Talent Search program, sponsored by the National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts.

From nearly 2.8 million graduating high school seniors, 2,700 students were identified as candidates for the program and invited to complete application materials that include essays, self-

(more)

assessments, secondary school reports, and transcripts. An independent, national committee of educators convened by the Commission on Presidential Scholars reviews application materials to select semifinalists. The number of semifinalists selected for each state is proportionate to the number of test-takers for that state.

The Commission on Presidential Scholars will make the final selection of the nation's 121 academic Presidential Scholars—one male and one female from each state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and from families of U.S. citizens living abroad. In addition, up to 15 students are chosen at large. The Presidential Scholars Commission also chooses the 20 Presidential Scholars in the Arts for a total of 141 Presidential Scholars.

Students chosen as Presidential Scholars travel to Washington, D.C., in June, where they will meet with government officials, educators, authors, musicians, and scientists. They also will receive a Presidential Scholars medallion at a ceremony sponsored by the White House. Scholars are asked to identify one teacher who was most influential in their education. The teacher also is invited to the nation's capital for National Recognition Week and receives the Presidential Scholars program Teacher Recognition Award.

The Presidential Scholars program was established by executive order in 1964 to recognize students who have demonstrated academic excellence and leadership.

"Recognizing these students brings wider awareness of their efforts to be successful. We need our young people to dedicate themselves to challenging academic studies and a high school career that includes extracurricular activities and community service work that helps them develop the skills they will need to be 21st century leaders," Burmaster said.

###

NOTE: This news release is available electronically at < http://www.dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2007_38.pdf >.